



Branching Out

May 1, 2009

The mission of Three Rivers Environmental Educators is to promote collaboration of resources and provide networking opportunities for environmental educators in the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula areas of Virginia.

TREE meetings:

Summer meeting, June 15, at Beaverdam Park, Gloucester

Program is at 11:00 am. Bring a lunch or bring a dish to share for potluck. Directions will be sent before the meeting.

Fall meeting, September 17, at Northumberland Public Library, Heathsville

Program is from 12-2 pm. Featured Speaker Dr. Jeff Kirwin will discuss his book *Remarkable Trees of Virginia*

Local Events:

Managing Impacts of Residential Docks and Piers:

May 12, 2009 – McHugh Auditorium in Waterman's Hall on the VIMS Campus

The CBNERRVA will offer a 1-day workshop designed to provide coastal decision makers with information and tools to evaluate and manage the environmental, visual, navigational and public access impacts associated with construction and maintenance of small docks and piers. This workshop will be of interest and benefit to: local/municipal officials, coastal and land use planning board members, zoning board members, site plan review board members, conservation and planning commission members, federal and state agency staff, business, community and environmental groups, dock/pier/marine contractors, environmental consultants, and private landowners. Registration is through the College of William and Mary, Office of Conference Services, and can be found at this link:

<http://quest.cvent.com/i.aspx?4W,M3,2659bea1-5d89-4c9a-8b1f-b2228a903ced>

May 14 Friends of the Rappahannock Annual Meeting

The annual meeting to celebrate conservation successes, meet new friends, and share homemade fixin's. 6 pm at our Education Shelter at 3219 Fall Hill Avenue, Fredericksburg. Please bring a potluck dish to share. *Rain or shine.* **Free.** Pre-registration required, call 540-373-3448 to register.

May 16 Embrey Dam-Fredericksburg Canal Tour

Planner and historian Erik Nelson will lead this interpretive hike to explore the remnants of three major dams at the river's falls. Erik will illuminate the fascinating history of the Embrey Dam, an 1854 wooden crib dam, and the Hunter's Iron Works dam. Bring a bag lunch for a picnic on our beach. 10 am-1 pm. *Rain or shine.* The cost is \$10 for an individual and \$30 for a family (up to four people). Pre-registration required, call 540-373-3448 to register.

Water Stewardship: Living Shorelines & Rain Barrels

June 18, 2009 (1-5 PM)

Longwood University's Hull Springs Farm will conduct a 4-hour workshop for educators that will explore many aspects of protecting water quality and aquatic habitats. We will visit an award-winning Living Shorelines marsh, look for resident animals, and help plant marsh grasses. Living Shorelines, a Chesapeake Bay restoration effort, is an environmentally friendly way to control erosion while providing habitat for shoreline wildlife. We will discuss how protecting shorelines is an important regional and watershed issue. Participants will also make a functioning rain barrel from a recycled pickle barrel that they will take home. They will learn how to plan educational rain barrel workshops in their own schools and communities. They will also receive a CD with watershed and rain barrel presentations, plus a copy of Virginia's Water Resources: A Tool for Teachers correlated to Virginia's Standards of Learning (SOL). It features information and activities for teachers to support interdisciplinary and problem-based teaching about watersheds, water quality, stewardship, and management issues. Workshop is open to teachers, teachers-in-training, and natural resource professionals. Dress appropriately for the weather and outdoor activities. \$47.00 (includes finished rain barrel, Virginia's Water Resources: A Tool for Teachers, optional canoe trip, and other materials) Pre-registration is required by June 9, 2009 by calling Bobbie Burton at 804-472-2621 (email: hullspringsfarm@longwood.edu)

For more information: www.longwood.edu/hullspringsfarm/

Chesapeake Bay Foundation middle and high school Student Leadership Opportunities

Chesapeake Bay Foundation is offering one and two-week Summer 2009 student experiences that help young people gain a better understanding of environment, history, and culture of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. Students develop skills and experiences that help them to become environmental leaders in their school and community while exploring boating, traveling, and camping throughout the Bay and its tributaries. Go to:

http://www.cbf.org/site/PageServer?pagename=lrn_sub_students_center

Other Events:

Statewide Campaign Participation in Stewardship Virginia Through May 31

Stewardship Virginia is a statewide initiative held twice annually to help citizens with projects that enhance and conserve Virginia's natural and cultural resources. Its focus is on projects that *enhance water quality, control invasive species, improve recreational resources, preserve historic and cultural resources, preserve natural heritage resources, educate people about recreational, historical, cultural, wildlife and water resources and improve wildlife habitat*. Get involved! Register a project today! Visit www.dcr.virginia.gov/stewardship or contact Bonnie Phillips at 804-786-5056.

Wetland Stewardship

May 7, 2009; 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

What makes wetlands different from streams and rivers? The Department of Environmental Quality in partnership with the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries will offer a 6-hour workshop for educators highlighting the biological and physical characteristics of wetlands. Participants will receive training in the Wonders of Wetlands (WOW!) curriculum and the statewide Wildlife Mapping program. This workshop will be held at the Three Lakes Nature Center in Henrico County. Dress appropriately for the weather and please bring rubber boots or hip waders if you have them available. Email [Stephanie Feaser](mailto:Stephanie.Feaser@deq.virginia.gov) by May 1, 2009 to register for this workshop.

Project Learning Tree Facilitator Training

May 20 – 21, 2009

This training will be held at the New Kent Forestry Center. For more information contact Lisa Deaton at lisa.deaton@dof.virginia.gov or (804) 328-3031.

Basic Geospatial Applications for Educators

May 29, 2009

This workshop will be held at WHRO Studios in Norfolk from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Educators will learn how to use the most recent geospatial classroom technology. For more information, contact Nick Koltun at nkoltun@odu.edu or (757) 755-5210.

Educator Workshop on Birds

Celebrate birds with Flying WILD, a new conservation education guide featuring interdisciplinary hands-on classroom activities along with information for engaging students in a school wide bird festival. Key concepts include migration, adaptation, the importance of habitat, and bird conservation efforts. Designed originally for middle school teachers and students, the guide contains activities suitable for all grade levels. All participants will receive a copy of the Flying WILD Activity guide and supplementary materials on Virginia birds.

Date: June 6, 2009 **Time:** 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Location: Merrimac Farms Wildlife Management Area,

<http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/wmas/detail.asp?pid=37>

Cost: Free! Pre-registration is required.

Lunch: Bring a Brown Bag and have a picnic on the grounds

Contact: Suzie Gilley, 804-367-0188 or suzie.gilley@dgif.virginia.gov

PLT Advanced Workshop at Holiday Lake Forestry Camp

June 15, 2009

This is for PreK-12 educators. Holiday Lake Forestry Camp provides an in-the-woods residential camp experience for about eighty 13 – 16 year olds. PLT seeks camper nominations from teachers who have students interested in natural resources careers. Six teachers are also accepted per year into the residential camp program for professional development. Contact Lisa Deaton at (804) 328-3031 or lisa.deaton@dof.virginia.gov or visit the website at

<http://www.dof.virginia.gov/edu/camp.shtml>

Project Webfoot Educator Workshop

June 16th, 9am-3:30pm, TCC Chesapeake

Project Webfoot is a wetlands education program and curriculum created by Ducks Unlimited for formal and non-formal educators for 4th through 6th grade students. Project Webfoot has partnered with Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) to offer teachers a chance to participate in fun, hands-on activities from the Project Webfoot Kit as well as learn the skills and methods for teaching about wetlands, waterfowl, and water. Free to the 1st 20 educators!

lbehm@tcc.edu

Ag in the Classroom Workshop

July 9th, 9am-2pm, Virginia Beach Farmers Market

The workshop is open to teachers and educators that would like new ideas and lesson plans about agriculture that meet Virginia sol requirements. The workshop is fun, educational and free! You will receive lots of free resource materials as well as lunch!

Sign up now, space is limited to 20 per workshop. Call 757-385-4395 or email Kalvarez@vbgov.com to reserve your space.

2009 Virginia EE Conference

The Virginia Office of Environmental Education is partnering with the Hampton Roads Alliance for Environmental Education (HRAEE) for the annual Environmental Education Conference. Please save the dates of September 9 – 11, 2009 at Hampton University.

Free Tools and other Cool Stuff

Capturing Bottle Caps for Recycling

Aveda kicked off a recycling campaign to collect rigid polypropylene plastic bottle caps. Since they melt at a different temperature than water and soda bottles, these caps traditionally aren't recycled and become litter or go to landfills. Aveda is collecting rigid tops from shampoo, water, soda, and milk containers along with flip top caps on tubes and other food bottles such as ketchup and mayonnaise jars and tops from laundry detergent bottles. Aveda will recycle these tops to make new tops for their products. For more information, go to: www.aveda.com/caps

Day in the Life of a Drop

A Day in the Life of a Drop is a set of activities developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to help students understand the connections between the source of the water they use and the ways their water use habits affect the environment and human health. Students also learn how to reduce water use and engage family members. After completing the worksheets provided on the website, students and families take the Pledge to Filter Out Bad Water Habits to demonstrate a commitment to saving water for the future. [Learn more](#)

Urban Bird Sounds

Students from the Codman Academy Charter Public School in Massachusetts created an audio guide for identifying urban bird songs. There is a booklet, lesson plans and a free CD that can be downloaded from this site. Go to: <http://www.urbanbirdsounds.org>

Learning Science in Informal Environments

The newly released National Research Council (NRC) report, Learning Science in Informal Environments: People, Places, and Pursuits, notes that "tens of millions of Americans, young and old, choose to learn about science in informal ways." The report stresses the need for professional development among educators in the field in light of the range of science learning in informal settings. http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12190

Riffle Fish - An Evolving Webumentary

Riffle Fish is an online evolving documentary that includes video clips about the insects, mollusks, fish, and amphibians that live in the riffles of rivers and streams. Produced by Ravenswood Media, the Web site includes a growing database of interviews about the science of riffle ecology and the conservation efforts to preserve their biodiversity. <http://www.rifflefish.com/>

Going to Green Educators' Toolkit

The PBS Going to Green Educators' Toolkit contains 19 units of integrated curriculum including thematic, multidisciplinary lesson plans, real-life case studies on video, readings with discussion questions, activities, reproducibles, and other resources.

<http://teacher.shop.pbs.org/home/index.jsp?clickid...>

New Listserv Directory With Professional Development Opportunities

The Conservation and Environmental Education Connections (CEEC) listserv is a tool for moderators from federal and state agencies and nongovernmental organizations to share professional development opportunities with conservation and EE professionals. Questions? Call 304-876-7956. Subscribe: <https://www.fws.gov/lists/listinfo/ceec>

Tracks to Success

How to Increase Office Productivity Using Free Software

How to Increase Office Productivity Using Free Software is a seven-part series that covers everything nonprofits need to know about moving from costly desktop office software to Google's free online office tools suite. This series offers tutorials for getting started with Google – using and configuring Google Mail (Gmail); Google Calendar; and Google Docs, including the spreadsheet and presentation functions – as well as a host of other free applications that increase productivity and are fun to learn. This series will show you how your organization can easily make use of free tools to achieve organizational objectives for both novice and experienced computer users. To read Part Five, "Google Docs: Creating Dynamic Documents," click on the blue link above.

Publicity

This is from the Virginia Naturally Newsletter:

Tools to expand the reach of your messages to the public (Part 2):

More people are getting their information online these days, so the following list includes some online tools to reach audiences where they are at . online. Before choosing a tool, always make sure to define your goal and audience . not every tool works for every goal and audience. This is a short list and only includes a few examples. For more information on any of these topics, look online. And one last note: Be sure to check with your local Internet policies and online strategic plans to find out how these tools might fit in.

1. Photos: If you want to show how your program is preventing and or cleaning up litter, consider adding a photo to your program Web site that shows people doing the work. A picture is worth 1,000 words. Quick note: Be sure to include people in your photos doing the action you want others to do. For example, show people picking up litter rather than a ditch strewn with litter. Show people putting cans in a recycling bin rather than showing a litterbug in action.

2. Videos: If you want to get people involved, you might want to post a video on YouTube that shows volunteers doing the activity you need help with (e.g. conducting a litter cleanup along with information about an upcoming cleanup and a need for volunteers. It helps to show potential volunteers how easy it is and what great fun it is to share the experience with others. It may also help a potential volunteer feel empowered because they see people like themselves getting involved and making a difference. Low tech production is best . just look online and see for yourself.
3. Facebook Page: People like to be part of a cause. Lots of people are getting involved with causes via online groups at such places as Facebook. Consider creating a Facebook page that describes your program and all the work being by your organization. You can let people know about your cause and page and that usually starts the spread of folks signing up as fans. Fans can leave comments, respond a forum topic you start, add photos (if you want) and RSVP to upcoming events that you post. Theyd also receive messages and updates you send. The idea is that youre creating a tool that is already being used by a large percentage of audiences (generation Y, X, etc.). Be sure to check with your local Internet policies and online strategic plans to see how a Facebook page might work for your program. And remember, a Facebook page is what youd use, not a Facebook profile.

Online tools are just one type of tool. Face-to-face interactions are always a good way to reach people with your messages. Consider new venues such as homeowner associations and civic groups or anywhere else your audience is. More on electronic communications will be presented at the annual conference in September.

Courtesy of DEQ Public Affairs Office.

Grants, Volunteers, and Funding:

Virginia Environmental Endowment – Virginia Mini Grant Program

Deadline June 15, 2009

The Virginia Environmental Endowment Mini Grant Program supports community-based efforts to strengthen environmental education and to promote stewardship of Virginia's waterways. Go to:

<http://www.vee.org/mini.cfm>

Got news, job postings, events, or other information to share? Want to brag about awards? Hear about something that would be of interest to members? Send them to

charlene.talcott@dcr.virginia.gov

Please forward this to anyone that might be interested. Want to be included on the TREE mailings? Contact jtritz@vt.edu